

Head Start/Early Head Start (Prenatal to Five) Positive Discipline and Guidance Policy

Policy Number: ED9901-01	Effective Date: 8/18/1999	Policy Council Approval Date: 8/1/2013	Revised 7/15/20
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HEAD START PROGRAM PERFORMANCE STANDARDS:

- 1302.45 (a) (1-4) (b) (1-5) Child mental health and social and emotional well-being.**
- 1302.17 (a) (1-4) (b) (1-3) Suspension and expulsion**
- 1302.46 (a) (b) (1) (iv) Family support services for health, nutrition, and mental health**
- 1302.93 (b) Staff health and wellness**

POLICY/APPROACH: Our program uses an approach to discipline and guidance that emphasizes respect for each child; developmentally appropriate expectations of children’s behavior; and the use of positive discipline and guidance strategies. We use a multi-tiered system of behavioral support to provide a framework for promoting the social emotional and behavioral development of young children and the adults who guide them.

TIER ONE & TWO - UNIVERSAL PROMOTION FOR ALL CHILDREN:

1. Supervisors and Coordinators will ensure all staff working directly with children receive initial and ongoing training in the following:
 - a. Conscious Discipline
 - b. Active Supervision
 - c. Standards of Conduct
 - d. Positive Discipline and Guidance Policy and Techniques & Strategies for challenging behavior
 - e. Child Abuse & Neglect
 - f. Head Start Performance Standards
 - g. Trauma-Informed Practices, Resilience and Protective Factors
 - h. Curriculum and Fidelity
 - i. Services for children with disabilities and special needs
 - j. Social Emotional development
2. Staff and classrooms will receive regularly scheduled visits by a contracted Mental Health Consultant and the Mental Health and Wellness Coordinator, who will conduct observations, provide feedback, and give recommendations to promote social-emotional development and mental wellness.
3. Specifically identified staff will regularly participate on the Behavior Team (B-Team) to discuss all program options and identify children and/or staff who are in need of additional behavioral supports in order to be successful.
4. Mental Health and Wellness Coordinators will provide regular training and technical assistance to staff, children, and families on the importance of mental wellness and how to improve one’s social-emotional well-being.
5. Supervisors will receive training on the use of reflective supervision in order to support the work of staff who work directly with children and families.
6. The Agency will provide an Employee Assistance Program, to offer therapy/counseling services, for any employee who wishes to see a Mental Health Professional.

7. All newly enrolled children will receive developmental and social-emotional screenings to identify any developmental delays or behavior/sensory areas of concern.
8. The program will offer training for all parents using an evidence-based parenting curriculum.

TIER THREE - TARGETED PREVENTION FOR CHILDREN WITH CHALLENGING BEHAVIOR:

1. Children with challenging behaviors and/or developmental issues and their families will be provided additional targeted support. These supports may include:
 - a. Environmental Modifications
 - b. Multiple and varied formats for educational instruction
 - c. Individualized accommodations
 - d. Use of additional Conscious Discipline strategies
 - e. Other supports to ensure their full inclusion in the program
 - f. Consultation with contracted MH professionals and/or referral to appropriate community resources for assistance.
2. Education Staff will ensure families are informed and invited to help with reflection/problem-solving when a child's behavior becomes an area of concern.

TIER FOUR – INTENSIVE INDIVIDUAL INTERVENTION FOR CHILDREN WITH PERSISTENT BEHAVIORAL CHALLENGES:

1. Children with persistent behavioral challenges and/or developmental issues may receive the following additional supports:
 - a. Focused observation and recommendations from the Mental Health Consultant
 - b. Written Individual Child Success Plan, developed by Education staff, parent(s), and Coordinator(s), with support resources from Area Supervisor, Mental Health Consultant, and other support staff, as applicable.

BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION INVOLVING THE SAFETY OF A CHILD AND/OR PEERS

In cases where a child's challenging behavior jeopardizes the safety of the child and/or his/her peers: staff will use de-escalation techniques, and as a last resort, they may use the modified hold for a child's extreme physically aggressive behavior.

Temporary Suspension and Expulsion

Head Start Program Performance Standard [45 CFR §1302.17\(a\)-\(b\)](#) requires programs to severely limit or prohibit the suspension and expulsion of all enrolled children. This standard refers to all children, including those with disabilities or suspected delays.

1. If the Behavior Team and Parent determine that it is in the best interest of the child to be temporarily removed from the learning environment but remain at the center during times of distress (in school suspension), then an Individual Child Success Plan must be written.
2. If the Behavior Team and Parent determines that it is in the best interest of the child to be temporarily removed from the center by contacting a parent or guardian to pick them up during times of distress (out of school suspension), then an Individual Child Success Plan must be written.

APPROVAL FOR ALTERNATE SCHEDULE OPTIONS

(THIS DOES NOT APPLY TO EARLY HEAD START CHILDREN)

1. No changes in a child's challenging behaviors after a reasonable amount of time and multiple attempts to stabilize using different strategies will prompt the Behavior team and Area Supervisor to explore alternative options of serving the child through either a shortened daily or shortened weekly schedule. The Mental Health Consultant will be asked to write his/or her

recommendations for the individual child. Final approval will come from the Director of Head Start/Early Head Start.

2. While in the alternate schedule option, staff will work with special education and mental health service providers and in partnership with the family, to identify behavioral supports that could allow the child to participate successfully in a full day/week schedule.
3. If the Area Supervisor, Parent, Behavior Team, Mental Health and Wellness Coordinator and the Director of Head Start agree that the child's needs would be best met from a program other than Head Start; the child will be transitioned out of the program and the family assisted with obtaining services more suitable for the child's developmental needs.

ONGOING RESPECT FOR THE HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START CHILD AND FAMILY

1. All children enrolled in the program will be treated with respectful care following the guidelines of Head Start Program Performance Standards and regulations of child care licensing set forth by the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services and as outlined in the Standard of Conduct signed by staff.
2. Volunteers will not discipline children in the program. They will be trained to inform staff if a child is engaging in problematic or challenging behavior.